

So, you want to be a Doctor?

Dr Rob Morgan



The Agenda for Today

- The do's and don'ts of applying to medical school
- Personal statements
- Interviews
- Making the right career choice
- Life as a medical student



LET'S START

RC
GP

CYMRU
WALES

Applying for Medicine – do's and don't's ALSO Information about Cardiff Applications and Courses

Dr Frances Gerrard,
Cardiff University School of Medicine

Medical School Choices



- 41 Medical Schools
- > 8000 places
- 33 England
- 5 Scotland
- 1 Northern Ireland
- 2 Wales
- All applicants who were successful after adjustment have been offered extra places in England and Wales – so this will not impact on your application.

Most important websites



<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/applications/entry-requirements>

Websites of medical schools you are applying to

GMC – for preparation for interview

Vital do's when applying to medical school

- Do research which courses/universities would suit you. Medical school courses vary a lot, so do universities
- Do you want to be close to home, or a long way from home?
- Check that your qualifications at least meet the minimum entry requirement for each school you are applying to. If you do not you will be rejected however good your application is otherwise
- Sit the right aptitude test for the right institution – this means you may have to do both BMAT and UCAT and look at your score and what the universities tend to ask for.
- Make certain your application is filled in properly – applicants regularly miss out qualifications
- Do get your application in on time – Has to be in by October 15th. Most/all medical schools will not consider later submission.

Don't's....

- Don't put anything in your personal statement that you cannot back up if you are asked about your personal statement at interview
- Don't omit qualifications – so if you have resat you will need original and resit grades on the form
- Apply to a mixture of vocational subjects e.g. medicine and dentistry or medicine and physiotherapy or midwifery . Other health sciences are often nearly as competitive as medicine and will reject your application if they feel your desire is to study medicine
- Feel you have to put a fifth choice down. You may wish to, but many biomedical science courses also go into clearing.

Important points

- Please try to be as certain as you can that medicine is what *you* wish to study – it is a long course, demanding, and you must want to deal with people
- Try to gain some insights – RCGP resources, talk to those in healthcare, placements if possible
- Volunteering is useful in any capacity – but all medical schools are aware that opportunities now are very limited and you are most unlikely to be penalised for this.



Myths

- You need 11A*s at GCSE – **no, but you will need good GCSEs, particularly if applying pre-A level**
- You have to have good predicted A-level grades for an interview – **no, some medical schools ignore predicted grades e.g. Cardiff – so research**
- If you are rejected then there is no point in reapplying – **no, many medical schools welcome re-applicants post-A level as it shows commitment**
- If you fail to meet the A-level grades then there is no point in re-applying – **no, if you have extenuating circumstances many will consider (look at website and email). Some medical schools will consider resits anyway – but check before you apply. Also graduate entry (GEMs) often accept much lower grades or even ignores school performance**
- You need to do more than 3 A-levels to improve your chances – **no**
- Medical Schools prefer all Science A-levels – **no, only a minority e.g. Cambridge.**

And more myths

- All medical schools need Biology and Chemistry A level – **no, some will accept one and another science for the 5-year course. Manchester and Cardiff both offer a 6-year course (A 104 in Cardiff for non-science A-levels)**
- If I don't get a high score in the UCAT/BMAT then I won't get any offers - **depends on the medical school**
- I must go on a paid prep course to increase my chances - **no**
- I must do a long placement in a hospital to get a chance of interview – **no, particularly not now**
- It helps if I have a doctor or medical professional in my family – **no, references to family medics etc are usually ignored in personal statements**
- I must have top achievements in hobbies e.g. music and sport – **no, but team activities are liked**
- I want to take a gap year but medical schools won't like this – **it's fine, but put it on your UCAS form.**

What you will need for most medical schools

- Good GCSEs (Mainly A*A or 7/8/9)
- To be able to get 3 grade A's at A-level: usually including Biology and Chemistry or two sciences including Biology or Chemistry
- Have taken UCAT/BMAT
- Know why this is the career for you
- Completed the personal statement according to medical school requirements (plus possibly supplementary information)
- Your teacher's support in the reference
- A successful interview.



COVID -19 and applications

- Medical schools were allowed to accept the extra students this year after grade adjustment – this should not affect offers
- All medical schools are aware the current situation will heavily impinge on work experience and volunteering this year
- Medical schools are making plans for virtual interviews (this may change the way in which they interview)
- Many medical schools are likely to interview slightly later than usual and make offers slightly later than usual due to the impact of COVID on their functioning (e.g. Cardiff won't interview until January)
- If you are applying next year it is likely that allowances will still be made.

Cardiff: Choosing a medical school – facilities

- Heath Park Campus
- Shared site: University Hospital of Wales and Children's Hospital for Wales
- Purpose-built teaching facilities: significant investment in Cochrane Building, Michael Griffith Building; IV Lounge for students



What routes are available for Cardiff?

- We offer **4 different routes** to become a doctor, depending on your circumstances
- Our A100 course (5 years) is for **students with three A-levels or equivalent**, including Chemistry and Biology
- Our A101 course (4 years) is a **graduate entry course**, for graduates of one of four Feeder Stream degree programmes only (BSc in Medical Pharmacology or Biomedical Science (Cardiff University) and Medical Sciences (Bangor University or University of South Wales))
- Our A102 course (4 years) is our C21 MBBCh course, **delivered in North Wales at Bangor University**. It is open to graduate entry from our Feeder Stream degree courses as above, as well as to eligible students taking the A100 course who wish to transfer to Bangor after their first year in Cardiff
- Our A104 course (6 years) includes a **preliminary year**, and is designed for students who have three A-levels, but do not have Chemistry AND Biology and may not have either to apply for our A100 course.

What A-level results will I need?

Minimum A-level entry requirements 2020-21:

- A100: **AAA** in Biology, Chemistry and one other subject
- A101 & A102: **BBB or ABC** at A-level plus your degree achieved or expected to be a **2:1 Honours or higher**
- A104: **AAA** in three subjects; you can have Biology or Chemistry but **not both**. You can also have **neither**
- For all courses, if your science A-level includes a separate grade for practical work, this must be a **Pass**
- If you have an AS, but not full A-level, in Chemistry or Biology, email medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk for advice.



Other A-level requirements

- One Mathematics subject at A-level (from Maths, Further Maths and Statistics) may be included.
- The EPQ will not form part of an offer but it is useful to include in a personal statement to show independent research. General Studies and Critical Thinking A-levels are not accepted
- Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate can be offered in lieu of an A-level (you will need an A grade). Remember that you still need A-level **Biology** and **Chemistry** at A grades if you are applying for the A100 course
- We do not look at predicted grades or AS grades.



What GCSE grades will I need?

The minimum GCSE grades to enable you to be considered for all courses are as follows:

- English language = 6 (B)
- Maths or Additional Maths or Numeracy = 6 (B)
- Chemistry and Biology = 6 (B) or Double Science = 66 (BB)
- You will require the minimum of **nine** GCSEs in total (including the above).

If you offer a range of 9/8/7 (A*,A) grades within your application, you are competitive and we would encourage you to apply. We award points to each GCSE (and A-level/degree) grade and this is explained on the next slide.

Cardiff will accept GCSE resits within 12 months of the original sitting, except English Language, which has no time limit for resit.

Selection process & points system

Selection process = achieved grades, personal statement, academic reference, (UCAT).

We allocate each applicant a number of points based on their achieved qualifications, as part of the selection process. **Points are awarded for nine GCSE subjects:** the compulsory subjects (on the previous slide) plus the best of the rest. (Please note - we score up to two Maths GCSE subjects only.) Achieved A-level grades of AAA or above and honours degrees also gives you points.

GCSEs	A-level (AAA required)	2:1 Honours Degree (min GCSE & A-levels required)
9, 8, A* = 3 points	A* = 3 points	27 points in total
7, A = 2 points	A = 2 points	
6, B = 1 point		

The maximum points an applicant can achieve are 27. We aim to interview more than 1,000 applicants with the highest scores (depending on the application rate). The cut-off score for interview varies each year as it will depend on the competitiveness of all the applications. We also use contextual information as part of our commitment to widening participation.

What admissions test do I need to take?

All graduates/final year undergraduates (except those applying for A104) must sit the GAMSAT exam.

All other applicants and graduates/final year undergraduates applying for A104 must sit the UCAT exam (to be taken in the summer before application).



How do we use admissions tests?

UCAT and GAMSAT results may be used as part of the selection process should there be more successful applicants than interview slots/available offers. We do not have a minimum threshold score.

What else should I bear in mind?

Applicants invited to interview will have **high scores, positive academic references and personal statements demonstrating the non-academic entry requirements** listed in our brochure and on the Cardiff University website. Once at interview, all candidates are equal. Interviewers do not have access to your personal statement or application form

We cannot predict the cut-off score needed for interview each year (UCAS application deadline is 15 October each year). We use Multiple Mini Interviews to decide which applicants to make offers to.

Transfers from other Medicine courses are rarely accepted. You cannot start another degree at any university and transfer after 1-year

International applicants are invited to email medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk with their subjects and grades

Extenuating circumstances? Email medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk.

What if my GCSE grades are not high enough to get an interview?

A: Apply to A100 once you have your A-level results.

Good A-level grades improve your chance of being invited to interview. The experiences you could have during a year out (volunteering, for example) could enhance your skills as a doctor and provide you with valuable experience.

A: Refer back to the 'various routes into Medicine' slide at the beginning of this video. You could consider a Feeder Stream programme or another degree.

My Centre Assessed Grades in 2020 were not as high as I expected.

A: If you had an offer from us for 2020 entry and the Centre Assessed Grades were not high enough to meet your offer, you can sit your exams in either Autumn 2020 or Summer 2021 (but not both) and reapply to us now. You will not need to resit UCAT or be interviewed again. If you get the grades we asked you for, we will honour the offer we made you. If you decide on this route, it is very important that you reapply through UCAS and that you tell us your plans as soon as possible.

A: if you did not have an offer from us, we are happy for you to apply through UCAS now. You will be required to go through our usual selection process and sit UCAT. If you have not already achieved AAA grades in your Centre Assessed Grades you can sit your exams in either Autumn 2020 or Summer 2021 (but not both).

Get in touch if you have any questions not answered here

If you have alternative qualifications, extenuating circumstances or just want to clarify anything in this presentation, please get in touch with the School of Medicine Admissions team, who will be happy to help.

Email us at medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk, or call us on 02920 688113.

It is impossible to put all the detail here. Please ensure you read our policy and brochure for the full details. This can be found on our website:

www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine/courses/undergraduate/medicine



So you want to be a doctor?









CYMRU
WALES





**ATTRIBUTES
OF A DR**

**YOUR
ATTRIBUTES**

**PERSONAL
STATEMENT**

**INTRO AND
SUMMARY**

Communication skills

Empathy

Leadership

Teamwork

Caring

**ATTRIBUTES
OF A DOCTOR**

Work experience

Resilience

Knowledge

RC
GP

CYMRU
WALES

**ATTRIBUTES
OF A DR**



**YOUR
ATTRIBUTES**

**PERSONAL
STATEMENT**

**INTRO AND
SUMMARY**



WHERE

The word 'WHERE' is displayed in large, bold, white capital letters against a background of alternating light blue and medium blue vertical stripes. Two stylized figures of doctors in white coats are positioned between the letters 'H' and 'E'. One doctor is on the left, looking towards the other, who is on the right and holding a yellow folder. The background is a solid dark blue.

PROVIDING PRIMARY CARE WORK EXPERIENCE

**INSPIRING &
PREPARING**

**TOMORROW'S
DOCTORS**

REFLECTIVE DIARY



www.rcgp.org.uk

Observe GP

Observe GP is an alternative to work experience for aspiring medics aged 16 and over, who are living in the UK. It is a free interactive video platform providing insights into the role of a GP and the wider primary care team.



Observe GP is supported by the Medical Schools Council as a suitable element of relevant experience to help prepare an application to medical school.

RESOURCES

- www.medicalschoools.ac.uk
- <https://gpschools.wixsite.com/gpschoolssession>
- <https://www.ucas.com/explore/subjects/medicine-and-allied-subjects>
- <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/studying-medicine>

RESOURCES

- <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/>
- <https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat/>
- <https://gamsat.acer.org/>

Medical School Interviews

Passion for Medicine

Dr Rhiannedd Tudor-Jones

Medical School Interviews

If there is only one thing you look up after today it should be this:

Journey to Medicine - produced by the MSC

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/news/a-journey-to-medicine-new-resources-for-teachers-and-careers-advisers>

Types of Interview

- Interviews procedures vary between medical schools – **check the website if you gain an interview**
- Some still have “traditional” interviews e.g. Oxford where a number of staff, usually including at least one doctor and often a student, will ask you questions but this is less common now as it is difficult to standardise the marking
- Most now use a system called Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs). There is a big range in the number of MMI stations used by different medical schools – eg. from 6 – 14.

Multiple mini interviews

Interviews procedures vary between medical schools – check their webpages!

- Short interviews with different people, in a rotation
- Solve puzzles or mathematical problems
- Explore your thinking: ethics, empathy, coping with stress etc.
- Practice debating issues
- Utilise the GMC and MSC websites.

MMI



Types of Questions in MMIs

Sample questions:

Can you answer these questions in 3 minutes?

- Why do you want to study medicine at Cardiff?
- What would you do if you were working on a group project and noticed that one member of the team was not contributing?
- A recent study estimated that by 2050, more than half of the UK population could be obese. Is this a cause for concern and if so, why?

Interview Tips.....

- Dress smartly
- Body language
- What you say and how you say it
- Give examples where you can
- Be positive
- Ask if you don't understand
- Relax!

Interview Tips.....

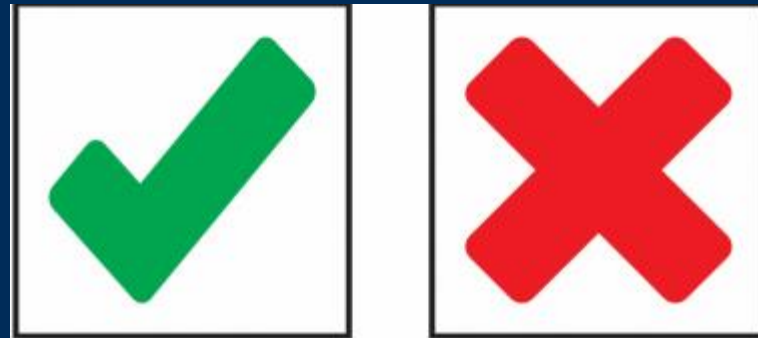
Answer the question

Self-reflect

Be positive

Research

Consider both sides



Don't panic!

Don't lie

Don't bluff

Watch rehearsed answers

What do you need to demonstrate?

- Insight and integrity
- Passion for medicine and resilience
- Coping with pressure
- Communication skills
- Problem solving

What happens next?

- Decision based on interview performance (+/- previous academic achievements)
- Offers
 - after interview (some)
 - after interview process is over (most)
- Offers > Places
- Offer by April (at latest)

Making the Right Career Choice

Dr Naomi Stanton



Early and ongoing influences

- Experiences now
- Experiences in medical school
- Experiences during foundation training
- Experiences doing specialty training.

Foundation years

FOUNDATION YEAR ONE (3X4Months)

- Builds on knowledges and skills gained in medical school
- Rotations in different specialities including primary care
- Options to develop skills such as research and teaching
- Full GMC registration after F1 year completed

FOUNDATION YEAR TWO (3x4 Months)

- Continue rotation through various specialties
- Develop competencies in patient management, team work and communication.
- Achieve the foundation programme certificate of completion

What speciality to choose ?

General Practitioner

A GP is fully trained in the specialty of family medicine and complex chronic disease having overall responsibility for patient care outside of hospital, referring for specialist treatment if necessary.

10 years
minimum
length of
training

Consultant

A consultant is a Doctor fully trained in a specific speciality who has overall responsibility for the care of patients, most often but not always in hospital.

13 years
minimum
length of
training

Realities of medicine



What is a GP?

- GPs are experts in their patients
- First point of contact with the NHS
- Over 1 million GP consultations in the UK every day!
- Wide range of medical conditions
- Treat patients throughout their lives
- Vital to local community.



What does a GP do?

Inform and explain
Diagnose
Refer
Reflect
Manage time

What does a GP do ?

Honesty

Health Literacy

Children

Uncertainty

Inform and explain
Diagnose
Refer
Reflect
Manage time

Empathy

Chronic
Disease

Language
Barriers

Elderly

Relationships

Acute
Conditions

So, why GP for me?

- House officer surgery Royal Glamorgan, Cwm Taf Bro Morgannwg Healthboard and medicine Llandough, Cardiff and Vale Healthboard
- Completed Glamorgan Valleys GP VTS scheme 2007
- Academic Fellow Department of General Practice 2007-2009
- Salaried GP and research position 2009-11
- GP Partner 2010
- Clinical Lecturer Cardiff University 2011-present
- GP appraiser 2011-present
- Clinical Director of the Rhondda 2013-16

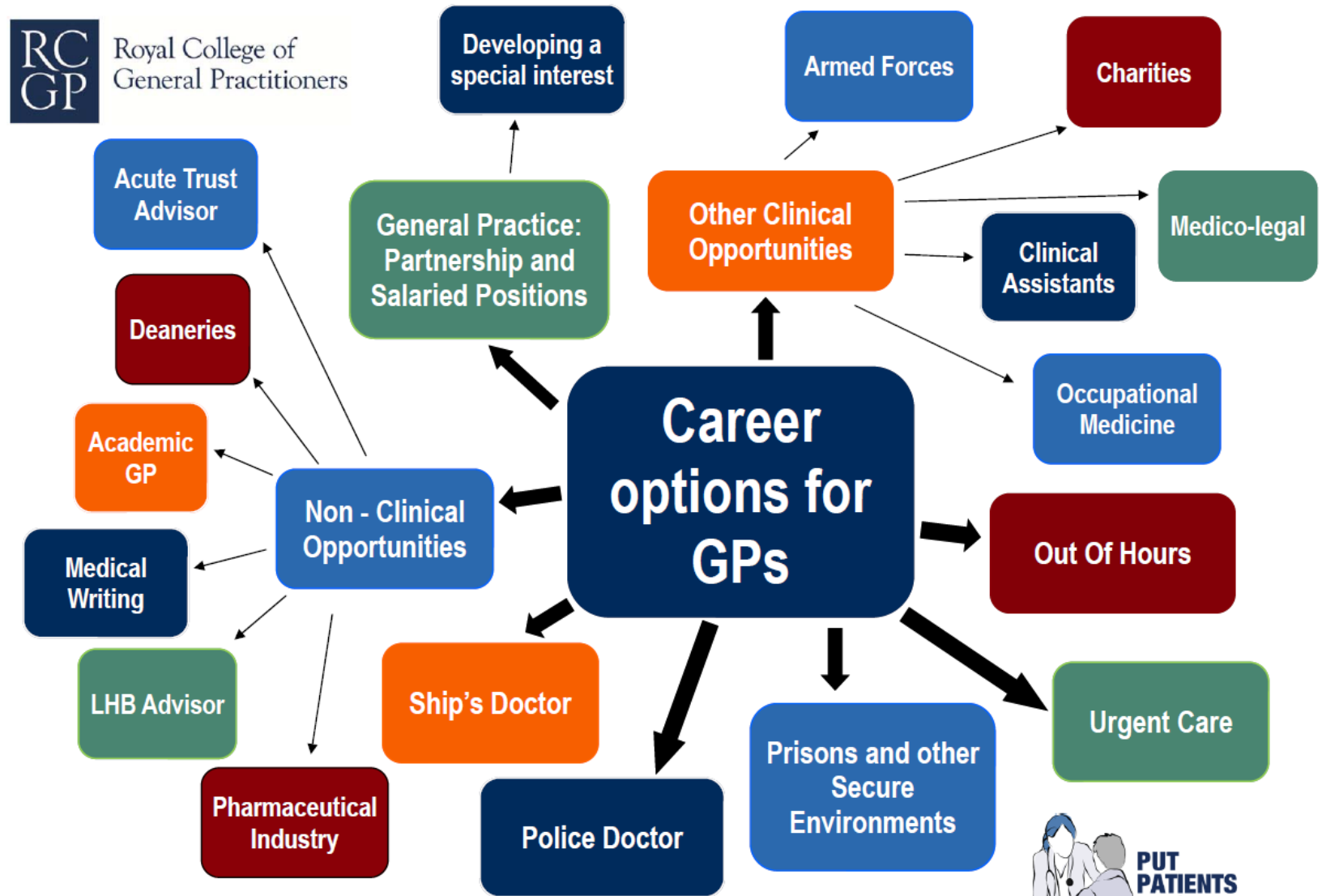


Design a career to suit you

- ✓ Flexible career
- ✓ Range of practice and community settings
- ✓ Sport, politics, business, events, the military.



Career options within GP





Being a GP is a job like no other – we are often the first people our patients regularly turn to for help, often at the most difficult times of their lives, and we build trusting relationships with them over time. That privilege is almost unique to medicine.



Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard
GP and ex-RCGP Chair

Being a Medical Student

Nicole Abel

Five interesting facts about being a medical Student

- It's about studying medicine but not just about that
- It's about hard work (but not all the time)
- It's about developing transferable skills that you can use anywhere
- It's about making lifelong friends and developing life skills
- It's about anything you want to make it about!

What you need to get into medicine and become a Doctor

1. To want it!
2. Determination
3. Self-belief / confidence. You are no better or worse than every other applicant!

Where to study?



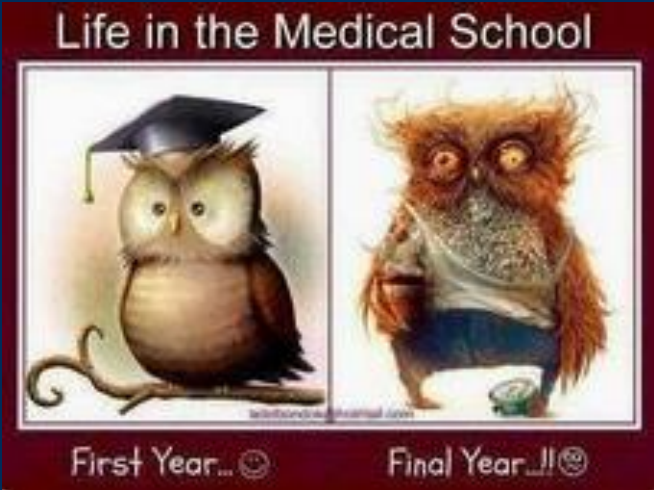
- City vs campus
- Size, distance
- Research & teaching ratings
- Placements
- Teaching style/course
- Accommodation – type, location, cost
- Students Union facilities
- Transport links
- Recommendations
- Friendliness

Making the right Choice

- The Medical School Council Website – this is vital – includes details of medical schools in UK, courses and entry requirements
- <https://www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/medical-schools>
- Websites of each medical school you are looking to apply to, particularly look at **entry requirements** and course details
- If in doubt about entry requirements, e-mail enquiries to the medical school admissions office: e-mail addresses will be on their website.

Medical student myths

Its not all about.....



Course content

Traditional course

Lectures and tutorials – for 2/3 years (pre-clinical)

Science-based

Clinical years follow

Integrated course

Start some clinical from day one

Science-based teaching alongside clinical training

Problem-based learning (PBL)

Small group work, peer-to-peer teaching, understanding through solving problems

Case-based learning (CBL)

Small group work engaging students in discussion of specific scenarios

typical to real-life examples, with the patient at the centre-clinical placement early –usually

Courses -
electives
and
more.....



Graduation and beyond

